



*Lovely Strange Dark*

**MINATO MACHI NEKO MACHI**  
**"PORT TOWN CAT TOWN"**  
**BY NANAMAKI KANAKO**  
**CHAPTER 2**

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# THE FIRST WITCH AND THE FIRST CAT



MINATO  
MACHI  
NEKO  
MACHI  
2





AND  
SHE'S BEEN  
SITTING  
HERE THE  
WHOLE  
DAY.

"THAT  
GIRL GOT  
OFF A SHIP  
YESTERDAY  
NIGHT,

so all sorts  
of people  
come from  
the sea.

This is  
a port  
town.

I WONDER  
WHY."

IS  
WHAT THAT  
GUY'S BEEN  
SAYING.

**STARE**

OR  
ARE YOU  
HOMELESS  
AND PENN-  
LESS?

ARE YOU  
WAITING  
FOR THE  
NEXT  
SHIP,







ARE YOU  
HAPPY  
NOW,  
SILVER  
PUNK? RENT

*She said I  
wasn't  
a silver  
punk.*



I'M NOT  
TRICKING  
YOU, BUT



THE LADY WHO  
RUNS THE PLACE IS  
REALLY SCARY.  
THEY CALL HER THE  
WITCH OF SMOKE.

REALLY...?



THERE'LL  
BE A SIGN  
SAYING "KANO  
HOTEL". THEY'RE  
LOOKING FOR A  
COOK THERE.

HEY,  
WAIT! GO  
TO THE  
TOP OF  
THAT HILL  
ON THE LEFT.



DON'T  
GO TELL-  
ING HER  
SO MUCH.

SHE'S  
MY PREY.



THE  
SEVENTH  
WITCH.

OF  
COURSE  
NOT!

*Shary*

YOU CALL  
HER THE  
"WITCH OF  
SMOKE"?

THAT'S  
WHERE

THAT  
DUMB,  
GLOOMY,  
STUPID  
SHARA THE  
BLACK CAT  
LIVES.



I wanted  
to go  
much  
farther  
west.

IT'S  
REALLY  
HERE.

There  
are  
many  
hills  
in this  
town.



SHARAH

And I didn't have the money for the most important ticket, the one out of this country.

IS THERE  
ANALYTICAL  
EVIDENCE?

but my ticket would only take me as far as the port.

WHERE  
WERE  
YOU?!

# CRUNCH

Ash  
Wick  
dye



"YOU SURE  
KNOW HOW  
TO GET ON  
SOMEONE'S  
BAD SIDE"

I never  
mean to,  
but it just  
happens

I'd better  
leave in the  
morning.  
She was so  
mad.

I might  
have said  
something  
bad again

What's  
she doing  
so late?

I GUESS  
EVEN COMING  
OUT HERE DIDN'T  
CHANGE ANY-  
THING

I ALWAYS  
FEEL BAD  
AFTER-  
WARDS...

WHEN-  
EVER I  
TALK WITH  
PEOPLE,

I'm bad  
at making  
conversation,  
so I keep  
messing up



I wanted  
to go  
some place  
where

I'd never  
have to  
talk to  
anyone.





I WAS GOING TO MAKE BREAKFAST BUT THERE'S NOTHING HERE.

G...GOOD MORNING!



WHO TOLD YOU YOU COULD COME INTO THE KITCHEN?



I'LL MAKE BREAKFAST FOR BOTH OF US.

UH, CAN I CLEAN THIS PLACE UP?



THERE'S ALMOST NOTHING BUT MILK IN HERE, AND MOST OF IT'S EXPIRED.

AND MILK

THERE ARE CHICKENS AND POTATOES.



LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING.

LISTEN UP.

OR ELSE YOU MIGHT REALLY BE RUBBING SOMEONE THE WRONG WAY.

THE MOST IMPORTANT TIME TO THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK IS WHEN YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH.



WHO ASKED YOU TO MAKE ME SOMETH I DON'T WANT ANY.

WELL, YOU LET ME STAY, AND-

AND DON'T YOU THINK THIS IS A BIT EMBARRASSING FOR A HOTEL KITCHEN?

# 港町猫町



SIGH...



YOUR STOMACH'S STILL RUM-BLING?

YEAH.

YOU SEE WHAT I MEANT? THE WITCH OF SMOKE IS PRETTY SCARY, ISN'T SHE?

I messed up again—



SHE'S GOT TONS OF MILK? WELL, IT'S SHARA'S FAVORITE.



OH, SO THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HEADING TO THE MARKET

ALL I COULD MAKE WAS POTPOURRI...



BUT HE'S BEEN GONE FOR ALMOST A MONTH NOW.

HE LIVED WITH KANO, THE WITCH OF SMOKE.

SHARA?

THE CAT THAT LIVED IN THAT HOUSE.



THAT'S RIGHT. NOT ALL WITCHES HAVE AMAZING POWERS.

THE FIRST... WITCH?



WITCHES... AREN'T ACTUALLY REAL, RIGHT?

YOU'RE STILL GOING ON ABOUT THAT? I CAN TRACE MY FAMILY ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE FIRST WITCH, SEVEN GENERATIONS AGO.



"HAVE YOU SEEN A CAT?"

NO.

She was looking for that cat... the entire night.

THERE'S NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT TO A WITCH THAN HER CAT.

SHE'S GETTING DESPERATE.



LET ME  
TELL YOU  
A STORY.

A LONG, LONG  
TIME AGO, THERE  
WAS A GIRL WHO  
CROSSED THE SEA  
AND CAME TO  
THIS TOWN.

A  
GIRL...

AND SHE  
OPENED A  
LITTLE TEA  
HOUSE BY THE  
SEASIDE BEFORE  
THERE WAS  
ANYTHING  
THERE.

SHE  
WAS

THE  
FIRST  
WITCH.

splash

splash



NOT  
THAT IT  
MATTERS  
WE CAN COME  
FOR LUNCH  
WHEN WE  
HAVE TIME.

ha  
ha

THERE'S  
NOTHING  
BUT TEA  
ON THE  
MENU.

Another  
tea for  
the old man

My mother  
said and didn't  
understand that  
I was not a child.

I hate  
tea! I  
want a  
manga!



STRANGE,  
ISN'T IT?  
WHY WOULD  
SOMEONE  
OPEN A TEA  
HOUSE SO  
FAR FROM  
TOWN?



AND IT'S NOT  
LIKE THERE'S  
MUCH IN THE  
TOWN.

THIS ISN'T A  
PLACE FOR A  
YOUNG WOMAN  
TO BE LIVING  
ALONE.

IT  
MUST BE  
SOMETHING  
INDECENT!

WHERE'D  
SHE COME  
FROM, ANY-  
WAY?

I... I'M  
SORRY,  
WE DON'T.

HEY!  
DON'T YOU  
HAVE ANY  
MANGA?





That was  
the first  
time the  
First  
Witch

and Ren,  
the First  
Cat, met



YOU'RE A  
WITCH.

I  
KNEW  
IT.



WH-

WHY?! IS MY  
TEA REALLY  
THAT BAD?



THERE'S  
TEA IF  
YOU'D  
LIKE!

TH-



UNLESS  
IT'S A NEED  
CUP-OF  
MILK TEA.

OH, NO  
THANKS



THAT'S WHY YOU CAN TALK TO CATS LIKE YOU'RE DOING RIGHT NOW.

BUT YOU'RE A WITCH.

YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE NOTICED.



GET ANY BOOBS BACK THERE!

because there are rules to the world that only a cat can understand.

You never know when a cat will speak to you.



YOU THINK A MAN'S GONNA SIT AROUND DRINKING TEA ALL AFTERNOON?

ALL THEY HAVE IS TEA.

WE DON'T.



TAKING A WALK?

WANT'S THAT?

OH MY.



run the distance to reach it!



run!

run!

run!





DO YOU KNOW WHY WITCHES HAVE ALWAYS HAD A GUT BY THEIR SIDE?

I OPENED THIS STORE THINKING I'D DO THE ONE THING I COULD, BUT...

BECAUSE MOST WITCHES OUT THERE ARE LONELY.



MY LIFE WOULD BE GOING SO MUCH BETTER

IF I KNEW HOW TO USE MAGIC LIKE A WITCH.

BUT THEY ALL FELL THROUGH.

AND I DIDN'T MAKE ANY FRIENDS.

I WAS ALWAYS A LITTLE BIT "STRANGE".

I HAD SO MANY DIFFERENT JOBS WHERE I USED TO LIVE.



WITCHES HAVE IT HARD.

"I LIKE BEING ALONE" EVERY TIME IT HURTS INSIDE.

THE SORT OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE TO TELL THEMSELVES

THE SORT OF PEOPLE WHO ALWAYS FEEL A BIT DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE.

THE SORT OF PEOPLE WHO CAN NEVER ENJOY THEMSELVES WITH EVERYONE ELSE.





A  
LITTLE  
MAGIC  
TRICK TO  
HELP YOU  
FIND HAP-  
PINESS.

BECAUSE  
MAGIC ISN'T  
SOMETHING YOU  
CAST ON OTHER  
PEOPLE. IT'S  
SOMETHING THAT  
EXISTS FOR  
YOURSELF.

CATS CALL  
THOSE SORT  
OF GIRLS  
"WITCHES".



THE  
SORT OF  
PEOPLE

WHO  
PEOPLE  
FIND HARD  
TO UNDER-  
STAND.



STAY

SO  
I'LL

HERE  
WITH  
YOU

Then the cat  
kissed her. The  
way only cats  
do, by rubbing  
their noses  
together—



WH-

WHAT  
SHOULD I  
DO? DO YOU  
KNOW?

BUT  
YOU SEEM  
REALLY  
LOVELY,

NO IDEA,  
THIS IS MY  
FIRST TIME  
LIVING WITH  
A WITCH.



I NOTICED  
YOU

AS SOON AS  
YOU CAME TO  
THIS TOWN.

LIKE  
THE OLD  
LEGENDS  
SAY, CATS  
AND WITCHES  
ARE FATED  
TO MEET.

AND YOU  
NOTICED  
ME RIGHT  
AWAY,  
TOO.















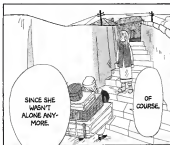












SINCE SHE  
WASN'T  
ALONE ANY-  
MORE

OF  
COURSE



Then,  
the first witch  
opened up her  
little tea  
shop again.



She  
planted  
flowers.

PUT  
PUT

LONG  
LONG

made  
new  
tables.

and  
started  
baking  
sweet  
bread.









